

§ 17.502

meets the criteria described in this section and are produced by or for VA by other than the Office of Medical Inspector;

(9) External reviews conducted by VA Central Office or a Region other than those designated by the reviewing office under paragraph (a)(2) or (a)(3) of this section as protected by 38 U.S.C. 5705 and the regulations in §§17.500 through 17.511;

(10) Documents and reports of Professional Standards Boards, Credentialing Committees, Executive Committees of Medical Staff, and similar bodies, insofar as the documents relate to the credentialing and privileging of practitioners;

(11) Documents and reports developed during or as a result of data validation activities;

(12) Documents and reports developed during or as a result of occupational health monitoring;

(13) Documents and reports developed during or as a result of safety monitoring not directly related to the care of specified individual patients;

(14) Documents and reports developed during or as a result of resource management activities not directly related to the care of specified individual patients; and

(15) Information and records derived from patient medical records or facility administrative records, which are not protected by 38 U.S.C. 5705 and the regulations in §§17.500 through 17.511, may be sent or communicated to a third party payor who has asked for this information in response to a VA request for reimbursement based on Public Law 99-272 and Public Law 101-508. Reviews conducted at the request of the third party payor do not generate records protected by 38 U.S.C. 5705 and the regulations in §§17.500 through 17.511 since the reviews are not undertaken as part of the VA's quality assurance program.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 5705)

§ 17.502 Applicability of other statutes.

(a) Disclosure of quality assurance records and documents which are not confidential and privileged under 38 U.S.C. 5705 and the confidentiality regulations in §§17.500 through 17.511 will be governed by the provisions of the

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Freedom of Information Act, and, if applicable, the Privacy Act and any other VA or federal confidentiality statutes.

(b) When included in a quality assurance review, confidential records protected by other confidentiality statutes such as 5 U.S.C. 552a (the Privacy Act), 38 U.S.C. 7332 (drug and alcohol abuse, sickle cell anemia, HIV infection), and 38 U.S.C. 5701 (veterans' names and addresses) retain whatever confidentiality protection they have under these laws and applicable regulations and will be handled accordingly. To the extent that information protected by 38 U.S.C. 5701 or 7332 or the Privacy Act is incorporated into quality assurance records, the information in the quality assurance records is still protected by these statutes.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 5705)

§ 17.503 Improper disclosure.

(a) Improper disclosure is the disclosure of confidential and privileged healthcare quality assurance review records or documents (or information contained therein), as defined in §17.501, to any person who is not authorized access to the records or documents under the statute and the regulations in §§17.500 through 17.511.

(b) "Disclosure" means the communication, transmission, or conveyance in any way of any confidential and privileged quality assurance records or documents or information contained in them to any individual or organization in any form by any means.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 5705)

§ 17.504 Disclosure methods.

(a) Disclosure of confidential and privileged quality assurance records and documents or the information contained therein outside VA, where permitted by the statute and the regulations in §§17.500 through 17.511, will always be by copies, abstracts, summaries, or similar records or documents prepared by the Department of Veterans Affairs and released to the requestor. The original confidential and privileged quality assurance records and documents will not be removed from the VA facility by any person, VA